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INSIDE THE BELTWAY



Tomas Schuman

Defector's dilemma

A Soviet defector to Canada, barred by immigration authorities last October from entering the United States by car, was admitted without incident last week at a Vermont border crossing and attended the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington. "I was on the computer list as undesirable" when the Immigration and Naturalization Service refused admission earlier, Tomas Schuman said. Mr. Schuman, whose real name is Yuri Bezmeynov, is a former Soviet KGB agent and editor for the Soviet Novosti Press Agency in Moscow and New Delhi. Mr. Schuman has frequently lectured in the United States since 1970, when the CIA and State Department helped him to defect to Montreal with a new identity.

Mr. Schuman said he had been barred from driving into the United States at the Champlain, N.Y., border station on the grounds

that he was born in the Soviet Union and once belonged to the Soviet Communist Party.

"Of course, I am outraged. It is a very painful process," he said. The irony, he said, is that the apparent hostility and inertia of "the bureaucracy here is the same as [in] the Soviet Union."

"The bureaucracy never tells you anything openly and sincerely," he said. "This kind of idiocy encourages people to lie. You see, if I had never told them honestly in the first place that I was [once a] member of [the] Communist Party, none of this would ever have happened."